

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT

Introductory Programme

for

District Committees

•
Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys

DIGEST

of the

NATIONAL CATHOLIC
RURAL MOVEMENT

●

MOTTO:

TO RESTORE CHRIST TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
AND . . . THE COUNTRYSIDE TO CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

This is the introductory program for the District Committees of the National Rural Movement in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys. From a diocesan viewpoint, these cover the dioceses of Wagga and Sandhurst, and parts of the dioceses of Canberra-Goulburn, Wilcannia-Forbes, Ballarat, Port Augusta and Adelaide. From the viewpoint of organization, the District Committee is based on the parish.

The N.C.R.M. District Committee is composed of anything between six and fifteen members chosen by the Chaplain on the basis of their suitability for the particular work which this program envisages. As far as possible, the D.C. will represent all townships and rural areas in the parish. Although it will normally have a majority of farmers, it should at the same time contain representatives of all vocations—professional men, public servants, business men, trade unionists, etc.

The N.C.R.M. establishes its organization in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys area because of its conviction that critical choices must be made in the immediate future, and that the wrong alternatives will be chosen if Christian influences are not in the ascendant when the choice is made.

The great public works which are to be carried through in the Valleys will lead to profound social transformations. Will they lead to over-industrialization, with its profoundly evil effects?

It is to ensure that the right answer is given to every one of these questions that the N.C.R.M. establishes its organization in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys. The N.C.R.M. District Committee is the local body. The District Committees are bound together by the Diocesan Federations, which in turn are to be united in a regional federation of the diocesan bodies operating in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys. To ensure that they have a real following in every part of the parish in which it operates, the District Committee forms Rural Groups in each well-defined section of the parish.

The immediate task is limited to the formation and training of District Committees.

The organ of the Movement is "Rural Life", which is published monthly and is sent to all members. Single membership is 10/- p.a. Family membership is £1 p.a.

As soon as a District Committee is formed it should actively campaign to enrol every Catholic in the parish as a member of the N.C.R.M.

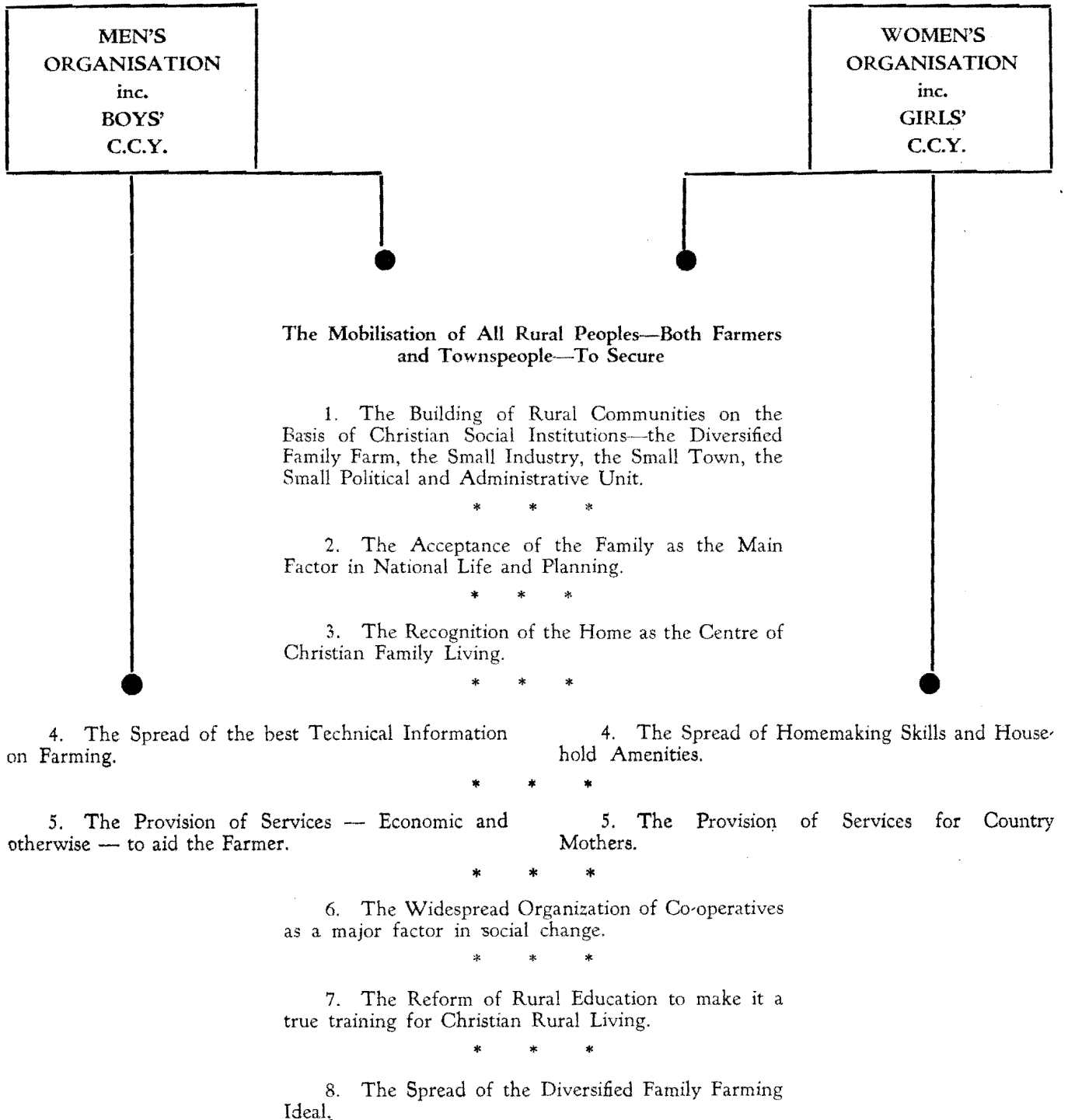
District Committees meet fortnightly.

Remember this absolute essential: The N.C.R.M. District Committee is NOT just a study group or a discussion group. Its members are expected to be active in local public organizations. Study and discussion follows from the deliberations of these bodies. They are a means to an end.

THE AIMS

of the

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT



THE ORGANIZATIONAL SET-UP

/ of the

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT● **THE NATIONAL COUNCIL—**

The Episcopal Chairman
 Headquarters Staff of the N.C.R.M. inc.
 The National Secretary
 Organizing and Assistant Secretaries
 Diocesan Chaplains appointed by respective Bishops.
 Diocesan Lay Delegates appointed likewise
 Three Women Members appointed by the Episcopal Chairman.

● **THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE—**

The Episcopal Chairman
 Headquarters Staff of N.C.R.M.
 Victorian and Wagga Diocesan Chaplains.
 Victorian and Wagga Lay Delegates
 Such other members of the National Council as are able to attend meetings of the National Executive

● **THE DIOCESAN EXECUTIVE—**

The Bishop of the Diocese
 The Diocesan Chaplain
 Lay Delegates appointed by the Bishop (usually Presidents and Secretaries of Regional Committees)

● **THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE—**

The Diocesan Chaplains
 Chaplains to N.C.R.M. District Committees in Region
 One delegate from each District Committee (Men's and Women's) in Region.

● **N.C.R.M. DISTRICT COMMITTEE—**

The Chaplain
 Committee members, chosen by Chaplain, and constituted separately as:
 Men's District Committee
 Women's District Committee
 Boys' C.C.Y.
 Girls' C.C.Y.

N.B.: In developmental areas which are made up of more than one diocese, e.g., the Murray Valley, New England, **INTER-DIOCESAN FEDERATIONS** may be set up to secure common action on matters beyond the competence of a single diocese.

PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

of the

DISTRICT COMMITTEES

of the

NATIONAL CATHOLIC RURAL MOVEMENT**No. of Items**

1. Opening Prayer and Rosary.
2. Gospel Discussion (15 mins.).
3. Arrangement of Gospel for Next Meeting (5 mins.).
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting.
5. Reports on Local Public Organizations (30 mins.).
6. Reports on other Movement Work (20 mins.).
7. Study Campaign (30 mins.).
8. General Business.
9. Five-minute Address.
10. Chaplain's Address.
11. Closing Prayer.

Secret Collection and Supper.

ITEM No. 1 — OPENING PRAYER AND ROSARY**Opening Prayer:**

Through the intercession of Our Leader, "Jesus Christ", in Whose Name we strive for the salvation of the countryside,

We pray

that the fire of Christian life that we have enkindled, may consume the land, sweeping away every remnant of selfishness, discord and despair.

May it create a new Australia of men and women who have . . .

FAITH in the land,

HOPE in the Movement, and

CHARITY in everything.

Mary, Help of Christians, Patroness of Australia, Bless our endeavours to restore this fair countryside of yours and ours to "**CHRIST**", Lord of the Land, and Leader of Men.

Rosary:

Recited in conjunction with the Opening Prayer, unless said previously at Evening Devotions.

Intention: Furtherance of N.C.R.M. ideals.

ITEM No. 2 — GOSPEL**Methods:**

1. Reading the Gospel of the preceding Sunday, with Reflection, Discussion and Application.
2. Reading a particular Gospel chapter by chapter, etc.
3. Using Gospel Discussion Book with prepared questions and replies (e.g., Father Cleary's "Gospel for Country Women").
In each case, aided by---

Discussion Helps:

- Mgr. Knox's "New Testament";
 "Gospel Story"—Knox & Cox.
 "A Study of the Gospel"—Thomas Bird.

ITEM No. 3 — NEXT GOSPEL

Gospel is allotted by Group President to Group Leaders (in turn) for particular preparation.

Group Leader consults with Group Chaplain in framing Questions for discussion.

Gospel depends for its success on the amount of preparation and reflection put into it by **ALL** Group Leaders between meetings.

ITEM No. 4 — MINUTES

The above are written in a pen carbon book.

One copy is sent to the Diocesan Director as a report on Group activity.

ITEM No. 5 — REPORTS ON LOCAL PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

This is made up of—

1. Periodic review of the list of Local Public Organisations and of our contacts within them.
2. Reports on meetings of these bodies attended by N.C.R.M. members or their contacts and discussion on matters of policy raised in these bodies in the light of N.C.R.M. principles.

N.B.: Discussion arising from these Reports and allotment of work should be deferred to Item No. 8.

ITEM No. 6 — REPORTS ON OTHER MOVEMENT WORK

1. Progress of Group Services (e.g., Credit Union, Co-operative Insurance, Library, Home-help Scheme, etc.).
2. Contacting and helping New Australians.
3. Personal influence on individuals (e.g., re performance of religious duties, re N.C.R.M., Thought and Policy, etc.).
4. Charitable Activity: Individually and as a Group.
5. Diversified Farming Experiment on one's own farm.
6. Improvement of one's own farm or farm amenities.
7. Community Action (e.g., remedying a public abuse, approaching Public Authority with some request).
8. Personal study (arising from Item No. 5).
9. Matters Liturgical and Devotional.

N.B.: Discussion arising from reports and allotment of work should be deferred to Item No. 7.

ITEM No. 7 — STUDY CAMPAIGN

A most important part of each meeting is the Study Campaign. The following text-books must be studied, portion by portion, in order:

- N.C.R.M. Introductory Program for the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys.
 Catholic Action in Australia—Bishops' Statement.
 The Fight for the Land.—Santamaria.
 The Earth, Our Mother.—Santamaria.
 The Spirit of the Land.—Cleary.
 N.C.R.M. Bulletins (monthly).

ITEM No. 8 — GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Correspondence.
2. Memberships.
3. "Rural Life" sales.
4. Group Finance.
5. Allotment of Apostolic Work, arising from reports and Group Discussions.

No. 5, Allotment of Apostolic Work, must receive priority No. 1 at meetings, and the Group President must sort out Apostolic Work for each and every Group member.

ITEM No. 9 — FIVE MINUTES' ADDRESS**Purpose:**

To train Group Leaders in the Art of Expression in public and in private.

Subject Matter:

What pertains directly or indirectly to N.C.R.M. thought and ideals.

ITEM No. 10 — CHAPLAIN'S ADDRESS**The Aim:**

To instruct, encourage and provide the motif of the Apostolate.

Recommended Reading:

1. The Priest in C.A. (Quarterly).
2. "How to Form Your Leaders". — Abbe Mazioux.
3. "Studies in C.A."—A.N.S.C.A.
4. "The Spirit of the Land"—Cleary.

In the absence of the Chaplain, the Group President should give a short Spiritual Address.

Caritas Semper

ITEM No. 11 — CLOSING PRAYER**Intention:**

For the Conversion of Australia.

Text:

O God, Who has appointed Mary, Help of Christians, St. Francis Xavier and St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus Patrons of Australia, grant that through their intercession, our brethren outside the Church may receive the light of faith, so that Australia may become one in faith, under One Shepherd. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
 Mary, Help of Christians, Pray for us.
 St. Francis Xavier, Pray for us.
 St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Pray for us.

CHAPTER I

THE STRATEGY OF THE LAY APOSTOLATE
IN AUSTRALIA

The work of Catholic Action is dependent on the mission of the Church and the direct mission of the Church is simply the salvation of souls. The Church's purpose is clear; and it is always limited to that objective. The Church's action in the course of her mission inevitably leads to great material good to humanity; it leads to better education, to the extension of the field of medical science, to the establishment of universities, to the development of other organizations which perform works of great importance in the material sphere. Although the Church's action takes these forms, they are purely ancillary to her objective. Her objective is one, the salvation of souls; to save or build civilization, to establish or extend organization, is not her particular task, except insofar as they help her to achieve her one objective.

In saving souls, the Church's first and most obvious line of action is the apostolate of individuals. This is typified most satisfactorily in the work of the priest in his parish, who establishes contact with each individual parishioner, encourages him to say his prayers, regularly to be present at Mass, to frequent the Sacraments just as regularly, and to keep the precepts of the Moral Law. This work of individual on individual is so basic to the life of the Church that it needs no further explanation. Even when it is reinforced by the work of parochial sodalities, it is perfectly obvious that the sodalities are only convenient methods through which the parish priest can further his work of individual contact and individual apostolate.

Now, if the individual could live in isolation and were not part of the world, this individual apostolate would be adequate to the Church's whole function. Unfortunately, it is at once apparent that this is not the case. The parish priest, through his contact with Bill Smith, knows that he is a thoroughly decent fellow; but after a while he may begin to wonder why he does not frequent the Sacraments regularly. Being a zealous pastor, he will soon discover that Bill Smith, as well as being a decent fellow, is also a logical man, and that he cannot frequent the Sacraments because of the practice of contraception. Being a man of imagination and logic himself, the pastor will realize that contraception is not always its own reason. Often there are reasons for it; and he will seek to probe these reasons so that he can cure the malady which afflicts the soul of his parishioner. He may find that Bill Smith is living in one room with a wife and family of two or three children. And every pastor knows that this would not be an isolated case. Especially in the great cities of Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle and the rest, there are not only hundreds, but thousands of cases like this. The practice of contraception is directly related to the fact that the individuals concerned are living under conditions which make it practically impossible for them to have a normal family and to lead a normal family life. Of course, it can be said that if Bill Smith is a hero—and, more important, if his wife is a heroine—that he will have a family, anyway. But the point is that the Church was not made for heroes. It was made for the ordinary man.

It becomes apparent, then, that when not only one man or one family, not only hundreds of men or hundreds of families, but thousands of men and thousands of families, are driven to the practice of contraception because of housing conditions, then the Church must be concerned with the condition itself, even apart from the individuals who may be affected by it. It would be the height of unrealism to try and deal with the result in the individual case, without dealing with the cause, considered as a general factor.

It is also clear that housing is only one of many examples which could be chosen. A fair example if it is shown, as it can easily be shown, that the Catholics who live in rural areas practise the Faith to a very high proportion of their full members — over 90 per cent in many cases — while in the ordinary metropolitan cities we are fortunate to get a 50 per cent or 60 per cent rate of practice, it is not enough to deal with the individual who leaves the land for the city. The general factor, as a factor, must be dealt with. It is the same with other general factors like class war, like communism, like radio, like films. If the Church is to fulfil her mission in the world, she must therefore be concerned with the apostolate of general factors, of general conditions, of institutions. Otherwise her apostolate of individuals will be greatly hampered and in many cases success will be made impossible.

Hence it is that some of the greatest contemporary authorities emphasize and re-emphasize the importance of this apostolate of social factors and social conditions. The late Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Suhard, in his great pastoral "The Church: Growth or Decline" was able to declare: "The social and economic problem is our main concern." The Bishop of Malaga — whose diocese is in the very heart of Spain's Red Belt — declared to a conference of his clergy that this social apostolate was so essential that without it all the other pastoral work of the priest was rendered almost fruitless. The same conclusion, in relation to the apostolate of women and girls, was strongly emphasized by the Holy Father in his Address to the Women of Rome:

In this utterance, the present Pontiff was simply reaffirming the policy so strongly stated by his predecessor Pope Pius XI when he declared in his encyclical "Divini Redemptoris":

"For the solution of our present problem, all this effort is inadequate. When our country is in danger, everything not strictly necessary, everything not bearing directly on the urgent matter of unified defence, takes second place. So we must act in today's crisis. Every other enterprise, no matter how attractive and helpful, must yield before the vital need of protecting the very foundation of the Faith and of Christian civilization.

"Let our parish priests, therefore, while providing for the normal needs of the faithful, dedicate the better part of their endeavours and their zeal to winning back the labouring masses to Christ and to His Church."

Hence, there are two apostolates — the apostolate of individuals, the apostolate of social factors and conditions. The two apostolates must be rigidly distinguished to ensure clarity of thought. But it must not

be thought that they are mutually exclusive or that individuals partaking in one cannot or will not partake in the other, or that there will not be a constant action and interaction between the two. The distinction is one of logical thought rather than of individual action. Yet it must be made if the strategy of Catholic Action is not to lose itself in a morass of conflicting ends and means.

If these great problems, these conditions, these social factors, are to be solved and not simply **talked about**, two things follow. In the first place they can generally be solved only by concrete action at the social, economic or cultural level. It is very easy, for instance, to talk about the housing problem and to stress its gravity in relation to the moral standards of the community. But if we are to **do** anything about housing we have to deal with concrete matters like the organisation of the building industry, the supply of building materials, the output of labour, and the interest rates on loans for the building of homes. Any attempted solution of the housing problem which did not concern itself with these very mundane, concrete and material matters would not be a solution at all. The second consequence of tackling these problems especially in Anglo-Saxon countries where Catholics are in a minority is that if Christian solutions are to be formulated and implemented, it is on a rare occasion only that the Church herself can do the job. She will generally lack the resources even to provide for her own people, were this desirable, let alone to deal with the housing problems for the community as a whole. Hence, if the problem is to be solved for the community as a whole, it can only be solved by the work of outside organisations whether they be political parties, trade unions, employers' organisations, professional associations, and the rest. These are the organisations which have the power, the resources, and the standing with the community to implement the solution. What matters is that the policy which is adopted shall be in harmony with Christian thought.

Those two consequences of action in the field of social, economic and cultural measures, the necessity for action through outside organisations — make it inevitable that this particular apostolate, which is the special field of Catholic Action, shall be an apostolate of the laity, a work of the laity. The bishop and the priest can and will proclaim the principles upon which a solution to the general problems of society will be found. But the solution will be implemented only in the plant, in the factory, in the association. And here the priest and bishop, by the very nature of their office cannot be. The representative of the Church in these fields is the layman. It is only the layman who can plant the Christian policy at the point where the policy can become effective. Hence it is that the falsity of one view of Catholic Action immediately reveals itself. It is often said that Catholic Action is made necessary because of the shortage of priests in the modern world. Yet it is clear that even if there were thousands more priests than there are in Australia today it would be impossible for them to tackle and to solve these particular problems for the province of action is one which, particularly in a non-Catholic and secular country, automatically excludes the priest. Hence it is that we can realise the full significance of the statement of Pope

Pius XII that "among the great needs of the present day is to bring home to the laity the conviction not so much that they are **in** the Church as that they are an integral part of the Church."

Facing us, therefore, is a plethora of social and economic and cultural problems, every one of which has a direct or indirect bearing on the salvation of souls. How is the Church to tackle them? Shall Catholics rush, bullheaded, into the middle of this complexity of problems and tackle them all indiscriminately and at the same time? It is obvious that if this were our line of action, we would be only beating our heads against a wall. Every war has its strategy, this war most of all. There must be a co-ordinated plan for meeting these problems one by one. Our forces must be organised and so disposed that those best able to meet a particular problem shall be allotted to their natural field of action. The key to the situation is the statement of Pope Pius XI which is too little repeated — "Every human situation has its corresponding apostle". If we are to deal with the flight from the land and not simply to talk about the flight from the land, we must organise co-operatives, land settlements, new forms of rural education, technical instruction and so on. Every one of these is, however, a technical matter which generally can only be implemented by the men who understand the field of action, namely the members of the rural community. They can expect support from other sections of the community, but as they alone understand the field, and as they alone would be accepted by those among whom they operate, the solution of the flight from the land is finally in the hands of the members of the rural community themselves. Hence it is that if Communism must be tackled in the trade unions, it must be tackled by the workers and the trades unionists themselves. They alone are there. They alone fully understand all the complexities of the problem. Others may be called upon to assist them, but they are the soldiers of the front line. Hence it is that if there are problems in the professions, for instance the threat of destruction of the independence of the profession by the intervention of the State, the battle must be fought by the members of the professions themselves. No other section of the community would be fully competent to understand or fully competent to apply the solution.

All of these points have been summarised by Cardinal Saliege, Archbishop of Toulouse, in his now famous utterance on Catholic Action, in the course of which he said:

"What is the job of Catholic Action? Unless I am mistaken, it is this; to modify social pressure, to direct it, to make it favourable to the spread of Christian life, to let Christian life create a climate, an atmosphere in which men can develop their human qualities and lead a really human life, an atmosphere in which the Christian can breathe easily and stay a Christian.

"This job must be kept constantly in mind, because as an end it determines the choice and adaptation of the means to the end."

Again, he repeated:

"A Catholic Action which is limited to the spiritual and the supernatural has not got its feet on the ground. We live in the temporal world, the material world. If we forget that, we play into the hands of materialism.

"Man is spirit and matter. Matter is created by God, a gift of God, and as such has a high value of its own. We live in the temporal. Social pressure works in the temporal sphere. Our brain is matter, living matter of course, but matter which is not spirit. It, too, works in the temporal sphere. We are not angels.

"Catholic Action cannot ACT unless it takes flesh in temporal institutions, the spirit incarnate in matter. Through these institutions it creates a climate, it directs social pressure. It no longer affects the chance individual, the isolated individual, but the whole mass, or at least the greater part of the given mass. Those who guide it are not cut off, they do not form a pious congregation; wherever God puts them they are sources of action, springs of initiative, creators of institutions"

In the light of this analysis, what are the main objectives of Catholic lay effort in Australia, whether this effort falls within the strict field of Catholic Action or in the field of ancillary works? These objectives may be summarised under five heads:

1. The defeat of Communism in the working class movement generally.
2. The building up of a thoroughly Christian leadership among the workers of Australia so that the policies put forward by their organisations in relation to wages, working conditions, family affairs and so on shall be thoroughly Christian policies.
3. The Christianisation of the environment of the organisations of employers and the professional men so that the influence which this section brings to bear upon the community shall be thoroughly Christian.
4. Since the institution of the family is jeopardised by many factors of a non-economic type—the lack of parent education, by the influence of the radio, the films, the press, by pagan attitudes which are current on all matters affecting the family—all the problems of the family must be tackled as a separate field of their own.
5. Since excessive urbanism destroys religion, and since all of these remedial steps operating within the perspective of urbanism are mere palliatives, we must reconstruct agriculture on a sound and progressive basis and ensure that the wave of European migration which is destined to come to this country will be absorbed into a rural background and not diverted to the cities.

These objectives, of course, do not exhaust the field. They are simply the main strategic objectives. It can be said that wherever there is a problem there is a task for the lay apostolate. All the immense work of changing mentalities, wills, habits and customs through which the very heart of the community alone can be reconstructed — all of this is the province of the lay apostolate. But when our means are so few, the most important tasks must be chosen and put forward as the major objectives, if we are not to lose ourselves in a welter of aims. These objectives, therefore, are chosen and emphasised to give point and direction to the organisation of the lay apostolate in Australia.

The practical consequence in the realm of organisation is that we must have, in the adult field, a Workers' Movement, a Movement of Employers and Professional Men, a Family Movement and a Rural Movement. We must have Youth Movements — the Y.C.W., the Y.C.S. and the Campion Society, and the University Movement, the N.C.G.M. and the C.C.Y. — which will not only exercise their own apostolate among their own equals but which will provide an invaluable preparation for their members for apostolic work in the adult movements and in adult situations later on.

The organisation of these various movements and the work which they are to undertake are fully described in the statement on Catholic Action issued recently by the Archbishops and Bishops of Australia, associated with the national organisation of Catholic Action. This introductory talk should be read in the light of that statement, and since the official statement of the Hierarchy is fully explanatory in itself it is not necessary to deal with the particular points which it will cover.

CHAPTER II

THE N.C.R.M. AND THE FUTURE OF AUSTRALIA

Two critical battles are being fought in Australia today. The first — which is being fought in the trades unions — will determine whether basic human rights in the field of politics, religion and social life are to be preserved. The second, which is being fought in the field of rural organisations, will determine whether those rights, once preserved, will be made effective in fashioning a social order in which religion will be an integral and organic part, and not simply an exterior insignificant adjunct.

The harnessing of the head-waters of the Snowy River, which has been initiated in recent months, has lent great emphasis to the challenge facing Australia in the second field. The creation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority and the beginning of the construction of the great dams at Adamindaby, Tintangra and Jindabyne have fired the imagination of the Australian people. Not only is it the immense work itself which inspires the imagination. The event itself is floodlit by the fact that this creative work is to take place in the very heart of the Monaro country, which the poems of Paterson and others have built into an Australian legend.

The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Commission has a limited, if colossal, task. It exists to generate electric power. The distribution of that electric power, once generated, and the distribution of the irrigation water which will come in great quantities from the Snowy diversion will be the work of other men and of other bodies. But as a result of the work of the Commission, no less than 1,800,000 acre feet of water will be available to irrigate the arid places of the Riverina. On the latest estimate, no less than 2,600,000 kilowatts of electricity annually—a quantity far greater than all of that which is produced from all sources of generation in Australia today — will be available to serve as the motive power of immense new industrial development.

These are the brief facts about the Snowy Project. It is obvious that it makes possible — nay, inevitable — immense industrial and agricultural development for Australia. The "Great Inland Cities" of which Mr. Lemmon, formerly the Minister for Works and Housing, spoke in his second reading speech of the bill creating the Commission, are no idle boast. However, if these are the facts, here is the challenge. Is the industry to be developed from the new sources of electric power to be large-scale industry on the model of the Newcastle Steel Works; or the works which have been developed by B.H.P. at Whyalla, or any of the great monolithic business structures which have been built up in the capital cities of Australia? Is the agriculture which is to be developed as a result of this new supply of water for irrigation to be Australia's old extensive commercial agriculture, perhaps brought to the peak of its logical development in the work of organisations like the British Food Corporation? Or is the industry which will be developed to be organised on the basis of the small-scale plant and the small-scale firm? Is the agriculture which will arise from the new sources of irrigation to be the small-scale agriculture on which the civilisation of Europe has been built? It cannot too often be insisted upon that the physical resources are themselves neutral. They can be turned to either end by the will of man. It is the will of man which is not neutral, and the result of man's choice is heavy with fate for the future of our country.

In this choice the true interests of the Church and of the Nation are, as always, identical. But it is likely that the Church with her truer appreciation of the real nature of man will see the issues of the struggle more clearly and more swiftly. If the former alternative is chosen, there will inevitably issue not only large-scale industry and large scale agriculture but the inevitable consequences of those factors — urbanisation, slums, flats rather than homes, the concentration of property in the hands of a few men, big business methods, mass unionism, class war and Communism. Working desperately within the framework of urban civilisation, the Church has been able to palliate to some slight extent the major evils which follow from large-scale industrialism; but even those who work most zealously in her cause know that all that they have been able to achieve are mere palliatives. The consequences of industrialism are major factors which have fashioned our civilisation, and very little can be done within the framework of the city to limit their harmful effects.

On the other hand, if the latter alternative is chosen and from the diversion of the Snowy there emerges a civilisation founded upon small industry, the small farm, the small town, and the small unit of government, it is clear that a stable social order will emerge favouring the institution of the family. The very structures of this kind of industry and agriculture will favour the institution of working proprietorship which is the economic basis of personal freedom. It goes without saying that religion will be an organic part of a society such as this.

It is in the light of the alternatives presented by this diversion of the Snowy head-waters that a glowing contrast emerges — the traditional task of the Church in

Australia in relation to the social order and the new tasks which will be placed upon her shoulders. In the past we have been fighting a defensive battle. We were born as the offshoot of a convict system and of Penal Laws. In the early days of Australia, the Church was a small body and rather unimportant. As it grew in numbers, it faced in its relative infancy the shock of the education crisis. While it was struggling for the bare right to exist, the social institutions which were to dominate the Australia of the middle years of the 20th century were being fashioned, and time did not wait upon the Church to emerge from this struggle so that she could play a decisive part in the fashioning of those institutions. The result has been that for the last fifty years the Church has been concerned with mitigating the social effects of a system in the foundation of which she had no part.

Today, however, the situation is different, almost to a revolutionary degree. The Church, although it faces great perils, is consolidated. Its social doctrines have been worked out in relation to the conditions of Australia and in terms of practical policies. Furthermore, she possesses the organisations which make it possible for her to implant that social doctrine at the very heart of our society. All that the Church needed was the opportunity to make her contribution. In relation to the formed industrial civilisation of the great capital cities, very little could be done. Society was fixed in the mould of old traditions. But with the great civilisations which are destined to come into existence in the Murray Valley with the diversion of the Snowy waters, a new society is in the course of construction. And it is here that the Church has her opportunity to exercise a creative function. When the opportunity presents itself to mould the institutions of this new society according to a pattern which will be in harmony with the basic values of religion, it would be criminal for Catholics simply to pursue the old role of allowing others to form and create the social institutions of the country and then to content themselves with criticising the evils which will inevitably develop and with applying palliatives to mitigate the worst excesses. If prevention is better than cure, then the creation of new social institutions when the opportunity presents itself is a nobler and more practical work than to permit social institutions to be created by secularist forces and to confine ourselves to the fringes of the great decision, merely warding off evils when we have the opportunity of creating good.

If this conjunction of circumstances, presenting the Church with that historic opportunity, were limited to the Murray Valley and the Snowy River, it might be thought that we were face to face with a purely local decision which could not concern the Church generally throughout the country. Yet to the eye trained in the analysis of historic forces, it is apparent that the condition of flux in which the Murray Valley will find itself in the next twenty years is symptomatic of the conditions of almost all the major regions in Australia. The rich agricultural area of Gippsland in Victoria has a relatively recent history and until today that history has been one of agricultural development devoted largely to dairy production. The great power project on the Morwell-Yallourn field will revolutionise the

entire social structure of Gippsland. It will play the same part in relation to Gippsland as the Snowy will play in relation to the Murray Valley.

If we look to New England in the north of New South Wales we find irrigation and hydro-electric projects both on the Hunter and on the Clarence Rivers, and a powerful New State movement which will give political form to the development which will inevitably take place. If we move further north, to central Queensland, we see stirring all the possibilities which can emerge from the discovery of the huge coal reserves of this area around Blair Athol, Callide, and other centres. In the far south-western corner of Victoria, there is the project for building a harbour at Portland which will not only make of Portland a great sea port but open up to maritime trade and industrial development all the region of the Western District of Victoria and of the South-East of South Australia centred in Mount Gambier. Here again, a New State movement with considerable popular support exists to give political shape to the impending social change. Other regions in other parts of Australia could illustrate the same processes.

All the evidence points to the one conclusion—that the decade in which we live is one of those moments of historic flux in which vast areas, which in Europe would be nations, rather than regions, are about to awake, to stretch their mammoth limbs, and to assume new shapes, now forms. In every one of these areas, the circumstances which face the Church are basically the same.

- * Everywhere, backward areas are suddenly about to develop.
- * Everywhere, there is the same conjunction of physical resources, which will bring about the transformation — water for irrigation, power for industry, people from Europe to man the plough or the machine.
- * Everywhere, there are the same alternatives—large-scale industry, large-scale agriculture, the political and social structures of a centralised community OR small industry, small agriculture, small units of government.
- * Everywhere, the decision will be made, whether or not we will make the decision, in the next twenty years rather than in the next hundred years.

In this historic moment, it is impossible for the Church to stand aside and to allow the institutions which will shape the future destinies of Australia to be formed by completely secular influences, which must inevitably choose the road which leads to social decay. The objection will at once be raised that there is nothing which the Church can do. The decisions which will fashion the new structures of social life will be taken by public bodies, and particularly by Governments, from which must come the vast financial expenditure through which the new resources will be mobilized to national ends.

This can be admitted without argument. Yet in itself it begs the question. What Governments and Parliaments do in relation to these matters can be determined by the effective action of local organizations operating the region to be changed—farmers' associa-

tions, irrigators' leagues, local electricity trusts, regional development organizations, local branches of trade unions, provincial Chambers of Commerce, shire councils and other vehicles of local government, the local branches of political parties. If these organizations do not concern themselves with the urgent matter in question, then the choosing of the alternative in each of these regions will be left in the hands of the urban bureaucracy, and the alternative actually chosen will be secularized. If these bodies urge contradictory policies, and are divided on the vital issue at stake, then their influence will be negated and the choice again will fall into the hands of the bureaucracy.

But if they can be marshalled together to support the Christian alternative, then the bureaucracy can be defeated and the physical resources of the newly developing regions can be turned to the cause of small industry, small agriculture and small units of government. That marshalling of local bodies to the support and militant advocacy of consciously Christian policy is, however, the *sine qua non* of success.

To whom falls the responsibility for ensuring that this task is achieved? It is granted that it should be the responsibility of every Christian, and not only of the Catholic. It is granted that it should be the responsibility of all Christian organizations, irrespective of whether they are Catholic or not. Yet it is an incontrovertible fact that, as a body, it is the Catholic community which seems to have been most fully aware of the revolutionary impact of our times, and the most ready to respond to its challenge. Hence, while it must be our policy to co-operate with all men of good will in securing that the right choice is made, we ourselves must go ahead—alone, if need be—and, under God, to win the victory.

This is the end to which the Rural Movement has directed itself in the last two years. This end, in many regions, has become its major objective. As Catholic Action basically adapts itself to the major needs of the moment, it can be anticipated that, with the advancing tide of regional development, the Rural Movement, in a relatively short time, will be directing the major part of its energies to this work. Hence, the major work of the Rural Movement becomes the training of apostles from the ranks of country Catholics to permeate organizations of the type which have been listed, to ensure that they will fulfil their historical task. The Citizenship Campaign, as it is called, by which members of the Rural Movement are mobilized in the apostolate of institutions, of associations, of organizations, has assumed absolute primacy among the objectives of the N.C.R.M.

The application of this new policy raises a number of practical questions, the most important of which may be listed under the following heads:

1. What are the policies which the Rural Movement must seek to apply to the developmental areas through the outside organizations?
2. In what way will the published programs of the Rural Movement assist Groups to fulfil this new major task?
3. What place have the old Catholic Action methods and techniques in this new form of the apostolate?

4. What is the relationship of the Christian Country Youth Movement to this new work of the Rural Movement?

The answer to the first question is, of course, complex. It is impossible to lay down a cut-and-dried policy to cover every region—granted the extreme diversity of physical resources in different parts of Australia, the different degree of development existing already. Hence, when one repeats the six policies which the Rural Groups of the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valley regions are putting in the forefront of their program, it is not that they are urged as a cut-and-dried policy for all regions, but rather that they furnish an example of the Rural Movement approach in one region. In the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys, these are the policies which the Rural Groups are putting forward in every organization in which their members have influence:

- (a) The electric power which will become available as a result of the diversion of the Snowy River should be devoted to the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys and not to eke out power shortages in Melbourne or Sydney.
- (b) The form of life which will develop in these Valleys as a result of the availability of power and water should be basically rural, rather than industrial, although the N.C.R.M. looks forward to a balanced economy, in which industry will be integrated with agriculture.
- (c) To ensure the maximum economy in the use of water and to ensure land settlement on an organic and community basis, all rural settlement within the Valleys should be on the basis of intensive closer settlement of farms centred around a flourishing regional town.
- (d) The agriculture of the irrigated portion of the Valleys should be organized on the basis of the diversified family farms.
- (e) To ensure the financial strength of these small family farms, they should be bound together by a network of co-operatives.
- (f) The whole development should be founded on a movement of adult education which will instruct the inhabitants of the region in the foundations of their future life.

These principles of social development for the Murray and the Murrumbidgee Valleys are the basis of the action of our Groups in those regions. There is hardly a matter which comes up in a local electricity or irrigation trust, hardly a proposal, the acceptance or rejection of which does not have some bearing on those principles. It is the same with policies struck by primary producers' organizations and even by local Chambers of Commerce and branches of trade unions. Hence, the activity of men and women, who watch these developments and seek to guide them, not in accordance with their own self-interest, but with principles which will secure the common good, cannot but be beneficial to the community as a whole. These same principles basically apply to the development of all regions, although the emphasis will vary according to the physical possibilities of each region and to the nature of the new factor on which development will be based.

To enable Groups to fulfil their new tasks, the programs of the Movement are being gradually varied from their present uniform national basis to a new regional basis. Thus, instead of groups in Central Queensland working on the same program as groups in the Latrobe Valley in Victoria, the two sets of programs will have a different presentation. The opportunities and the challenge of the two regions are different; and if groups are to play a real part in this development, they must have a detailed knowledge of the facts of their regions—types of soil, climate, possible forms of agriculture, power resources, industrial development and possibilities, population, and so on. If they are to become influential forces in the organizations of their respective regions, it is not enough for them to know general principles. They must know all the facts, otherwise they will not even be listened to.

The necessity for thus changing the program and substituting a variety of regional programs for the one national program, imposes a great burden on National and Diocesan Headquarters. It will require patience and forbearance on all sides. But it must be done if the Rural Movement is to do its work.

In the light of this new work of the N.C.R.M., the old methods and techniques of Catholic Action acquire new meaning. This is not the end, as some have said, of the work of contact and influence. Rather, it gives to the techniques of contact, influence, teams and sub-teams that point, that direction, which they have sometimes lacked in the past.

It is not enough for the Rural Group member to know his stuff. He may be listened to in an outside organization, but he will not be really influential unless a public opinion has been created in favour of the general propositions for which he will stand. Hence, contact and influence become more essential than ever. This time, however, they have a definite purpose—to create a public opinion in favour of the details which, in time, will add up to a Christian plan for the area. The Rural Group member will not be influential if he is alone. He must have people ready to support him. Furthermore, even with the best organization in the world, it may not be possible to cover all the outside organizations in the district with Rural Group members. It is necessary to spread the right ideas in these other outside bodies through others, who may not only be outside the Rural Group, but who, often—and preferably—may not even be adherents of our own Faith. Hence, the necessity for teams and sub-groups. All the technique of Catholic Action is more than ever applicable. This time, however, it has direction.

Again, this new concept settles the role of the C.C.Y.—the only Movement of Catholic Action which has received the mandate of the Bishops to operate among country youth. If the Rural Movement is to follow through with this work, then young apostles must be trained for it—trained to be the leaders, when they possess the native ability, trained to be at least the creators of a favourable public opinion if their ability is that of the ordinary man. The C.C.Y. will thus impart specialized training to its members, preparing them for this work which they will later perform. Their training will not be merely intellectual. They will not be apostles of institutions as adults, unless

they are trained to be apostles among the youth of their own age and sex when they are young. But the whole background of their work, the whole direction of their programs, will spring from country conditions, and from country problems.

Otherwise, they will be ill-equipped for their present apostolate as young people, since they will not understand the specifically rural background of the many problems of country youth. They will not be equipped at all for the absolutely vital work which they must perform in creating the new institutions of country life when they are adults. Hence, the necessity for a Christian Country Youth Movement to operate in all rural areas and small and medium-sized country towns, complementing the work which the Y.C.W. and the N.C.G.M. perform in the metropolitan and other major industrial areas.

That is the role of the N.C.R.M. in the future. If it fulfils its objective, then, perhaps, it will not be said of the Catholic country people of Australia, that they allowed the future to take shape without them—and, therefore, against them.

CHAPTER III.

The accompanying booklet "Policy for the Murray Valley" should be studied here before proceeding to Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

N.C.R.M. METHOD OF ACTION — THE APOSTOLATE IN THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION

The accompanying booklet, "Policy for the Murray Valley" has outlined the objective of the Rural Movement in the rapidly changing situation in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys. The N.C.R.M. therefore possesses a policy. But has it a method by which that policy can be put into practice?

WHAT DOES N.C.R.M. POLICY MEAN IN RELATION TO AN INDIVIDUAL DISTRICT?

Before we answer this question, let us first see what our policy means in practice in a particular district in the two valleys. Our general objective is that, in the whole vast and rich area, there should be, first of all, an adequate and imaginative plan of public works which will enable the area to be developed rapidly and to its full potential. In this program of public works, the supply of electricity and of irrigation is probably the most important single factor. But there are other factors as well, without the provision of which the area cannot develop. There must be new roads, new railway lines, new plane services and transport services generally. Existing townships must grow in size by the addition of local industries to cater for the increased population which will follow the diversification and the intensification of agriculture. New townships will arise in areas in which today there are only

farms. And as these townships are either founded or grow in extent, there must be new schools to look after the children of these areas, new social and cultural institutions, newspapers, radio stations, theatres, to offer the people of the area the opportunity for a fuller life.

Any program of development which does not look to the individual district and foresee its own individual development along these lines, is purely theoretical and unlikely to issue in any practical result.

IS THERE A CLEAR EXAMPLE OF WHAT THE N.C.R.M. MEANS BY A "DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM"?

Probably there is no better way of appreciating the multitude of practical work which must be undertaken by Commonwealth, State, regional or local authorities if an area is to be really developed, than to look at one issue of the "Murray Valley Newsletter", the organ of the Murray Valley Development League. The Murray Valley is a rapidly developing region, and the news stories contained in the issue of April 20th—which is chosen at random—give a clear picture of the actual facts of development in the many districts which go to make up the entire Valley.

Here are the headlines contained in this issue:

Prime Minister to Invite Premiers to Murray Valley Talk—(to discuss the formation of a Coordinating Committee for the Murray Valley area).

The Development of the Moorlands Coalfield in South Australia.

Water for Murrakool,—The River Murray Investigation Committee concludes its public hearings at Barham and Swan Hill to determine whether Murray Water should be made available in the Murrakool Area.

Shepparton Plans Check to Floodwaters.

Albury Meeting Decides on Free Library.

Murray Pines for Warby Range.

Murray Valley Development League and Murrumbidgee Water Users' Association to Dovetail Aims.

Tenders for Big Eildon Weir.

Eden as a Port for Riverina?

Kerang Chamber of Commerce to Seek British Migrants.

New Factory Opens at Mildura.

Vine Nursery for Coomealla.

Loxton Irrigation Bureau Discusses Sprinklers.

Canal from Goolwa to the Sea.

Every one of the facts surveyed in these headlines spells development or the prospect of development for the Murray Valley. Unless concrete projects like these are proposed, they will not be undertaken. Unless they are undertaken, there will be no development.

Unless there is development, in plain, hard fact, there is no action: there is only talk about action.

Thus, development consists in this—a new industry here, a soil conservation project there, a new school in one place, an agricultural experiment station in still another, a co-operative in one area, a library in one town, and so on.

So that, if the N.C.R.M.'s Seven-point Program for the development of the two river valleys is to become a reality, the task of N.C.R.M. Committees in all the district of both valleys is to see that projects like these are undertaken in those districts, according to the opportunity which each district offers.

WHO IS GOING TO CARRY OUT THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM?

"To see to it that projects like these are undertaken in those districts". But, you will ask, who is going to DO the job? Is it to be the N.C.R.M. Committee? Is this small Group itself to raise the money, to engage an engineer to draw up the plans of a particular project, to let the contract, to supervise the job? Or, if the N.C.R.M. Committee is not big enough to do the job, is the task to be taken on by the Catholic parish or the Catholic community as a whole? Is that what you want us to do?

The answer is: "No: not at all". That would be a very foolish approach, for many reasons. In the first place, in the vast majority of cases, even if such a program were desirable, it would be impossible. The Catholic community would not be big enough, wealthy enough, nor would it often have the men with the training to do the job. In the second place, even if these objections did not hold, it would be a very grave mistake in the present condition of Australian opinion to make of this kind of action, a sectarian or denominational activity, which would, in many cases, divide the district.

The correct agencies through which these various developmental projects should be sponsored and carried through are **local organizations**. That is an absolute rule, which is so well-proven in practice that it should not be departed from. It may sometimes be necessary to form a new local and public organization to carry out a special work—e.g., a regional development league, to bring pressure on public authorities—but the rule remains the same. **Our policy is that the right agency for all developmental work is the local public organization, or all local public organizations acting collectively.**

What are the reasons for this policy? They are four in number:

1. The local public organization is the body which has carried through this type of work in the past.
2. The local public organization will be listened to by the public authority, whether it is a shire council or a State or the Federal Government, the local shire president or the local member of parliament or a visiting Cabinet Minister.
3. The local public organization is not a sectional body whose policy will excite sectarian prejudice.

4. The local public organization can appeal for the support of the entire community, irrespective of religion or of political beliefs.

WHAT ARE THESE LOCAL PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH ARE THUS DEFINED AS THE NORMAL AGENCY THROUGH WHICH DEVELOPMENTAL ACTION SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN?

These local public organizations are so numerous that it is impossible to detail them all. The Dimboola Group of the N.C.R.M., when it began its activities in this sphere, discovered that there were no less than 71 public bodies of this type operating in the district. They were not very big bodies. In many cases, they were not very live bodies. But they were there. And Dimboola is not a very big township.

While it is impossible to give a complete list of all the local public organizations which are likely to be found in every district, because they vary from district to district, it is both possible and useful to list some of the main types of organization, which will be found almost everywhere:

1. **Farmers' Organizations.** — Woolgrowers, Wheatgrowers, Dairymen, Tobacco Growers, Onion Growers, etc.
2. **Civic Organizations.**—The local shire council, the local city council, the Progress Association.
3. **Commercial or Industrial Organizations.**—The local Chamber of Commerce, local sections or branches of trade unions.
4. **Technical Organizations.**—Electricity Trusts, Irrigation Leagues, Water Users' Associations, etc.
5. **Political Organizations.**—Local branches of all political parties.
6. **Cultural Organizations.** — Adult Education bodies, Library Committees, etc.
7. **Social and Welfare Organizations** — e.g., branches of the C.W.A.
8. **Regional Development Organizations, New State Movements, etc.**

These are the main types of organizations which will be found in country areas. They are the types of organizations which should be used as the normal agency for all developmental work. So that, if it is decided that a new industry should be brought to the district, or that a road should be built to open up a new area, or that irrigation should be extended to an area previously without water supply, or that a library should be inaugurated, the right method is to secure the support of one or more of these local organizations.

Once this support is secured, these organizations will be in a position to represent the case to the public authority, if it is a matter requiring the provision of public finance or the provision of public technical assistance; or, alternatively, to secure the same objective by the co-operative action of all sections of the local community itself.

DOES THIS METHOD APPLY ONLY WHEN THE RURAL MOVEMENT IS OPERATING IN ONE OF THE GREAT DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS, e.g., THE MURRAY VALLEY, NEW ENGLAND, THE BURDEKIN RIVER VALLEY?

The answer is again in the negative. The method applies in every country district, irrespective of whether it is an area in which there will be this spectacular type of development, or not.

Outside the marginal lands which are unsuitable for cultivation, there is hardly a district in Australia in which some form of development is not essential. The need for development is perfectly clear in the great new developmental areas listed above. But the need for developmental work exists in every district in which an affirmative answer can be given to either or both of these questions by the people of the district:

Is the district losing its soil through erosion or the deterioration of the land?

Is the district losing its people through their departure for the cities?

If an N.C.R.M. Committee in any district genuinely considers these questions, it will find, almost invariably, that it must answer both of them in the affirmative. There is hardly a rural area in the whole of Australia in which the flight from the land is not a permanent running sore, and in which the deterioration of the soil is not apparent, either through the obvious evidence of erosion or through the more hidden testimony of falling crop yields.

If the answer to either or both of these questions is "Yes", then obviously something must be done if the district is to be saved. There must be concrete projects for the diversification of farming, soil conservation projects, afforestation schemes, irrigation projects, the establishment of local industries, etc.

Thus, there is no real difference for the Rural Movement between the developmental area properly so called and the other agricultural areas of Australia, except that the opportunities offered by the former are naturally far wider than those offered by the latter.

WHERE DOES THE N.C.R.M. DISTRICT COMMITTEE FIT INTO ALL THIS?

From what has been written, it might appear that there is no need for the Rural Movement at all; that, if the local public organizations are the normal channel through which development projects are to be sponsored, the job can be carried through by them without the need for an organization of our men.

This would be a mistake. The N.C.R.M. District Committee has three essential functions which it alone is in a position to perform. These functions are:

1. To ensure that the local bodies actually do their job of making development take place.
2. To ensure that, once these local bodies do become active and alive, they do not support every kind of development project, without paying any attention to the effects which each project will have on the life of the district.
3. To train people who will be capable of giving sound leadership to these local bodies.

Let us consider each of these functions of the N.C.R.M. District Committee a little further:

1. To get the local bodies to do their job:

It should be apparent that the majority of local organizations in many country areas are almost completely dead. Very often, they do not meet at all. If they so meet, at irregular intervals, the meetings are purely formal and lack purpose. In only too many cases, those local organizations which really have life in them are concerned only with semi-political representations limited to the price for farm products.

The N.C.R.M. District Committee's task is to activate these local bodies. It is to show them that their task is not only to agitate for higher prices, etc., but to act as the focus of local interests. Its task is to ensure that concrete developmental proposals are brought to the attention of these local bodies and acted upon by them,

2. To ensure that these local organizations exercise a sound judgment on the kind of developmental work undertaken in the district:

Every kind of developmental project is not necessarily good for a district. The N.C.R.M. District Committee's task is not only to foster good developmental projects through local organizations, but to check and to prevent bad ones.

Two examples will illustrate this point:

- (a) Normally, it is a good thing for a new industry to establish itself in a country district. But not every industry fits the bill. For example, the establishment of Bruck Mills in Wangaratta (Vic.) has had a bad effect on the rural pattern of the area. Bruck Mills have grown so large that Wangaratta and the surrounding area are becoming industrialized, with all the attendant evils of over-industrialism. For the farmers of the surrounding districts, one of the most immediate effects is that Bruck Mills have absorbed all the seasonal labour previously offering over a wide radius, thus making agriculture a more difficult occupation, and leading to the decline of soil conservation and proper diversification through lack of labour. Industries were needed in the area, but not this kind of industry.

The proposal to establish Bruck Mills in Wangaratta should have been considered by an N.C.R.M. District Committee, rejected, and opposed through local organizations.

It is the task of the District Committee, therefore, to oppose through local organizations types of development which will be harmful.

- (b) The proposal that the British Food Corporation, with its giant farming methods, should come into the Murray Valley, was actually opposed by local organizations in the Murray Valley as a result of this type of activity on the part of an N.C.R.M. District Committee.

Similar examples will arise in New England and in all other developmental areas.

3. **To train people who will give sound leadership to these local bodies:**

There is no need to point out the vastness of the task to be undertaken by the N.C.R.M. District Committees. While vast, these objectives are capable of achievement. But they can be achieved only by men who have a clear vision of the end to be achieved, who have a good grasp of ways and means, who are capable of wielding an influence in local organizations—some of whom are good speakers, others good writers, others, again, good judges of tactics—and so on.

The N.C.R.M. District Committee trains its members in all of these skills to fit them for the task.

Hence, the regular programs of the N.C.R.M. District Committee—the agenda of the regular fortnightly meeting, the program of work between meetings—are based on these needs.

TO SUM UP, THEN — WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE N.C.R.M. DISTRICT COMMITTEE?

1. **The first function** of the N.C.R.M. District Committee is to give its members a **full Christian social education.**

In particular, in the first two years of the Committee's existence, it concentrates on this work of education—taking the members through the Church's social doctrine, particularly in relation to agricultural questions. This educational work never ceases, although its form changes from time to time.

2. **The second function** of the N.C.R.M. District Committee is to **introduce its members into all local public organizations**, and to ensure that they play a full role in these organizations.

The method by which this is done is by the insistence on Reports on Work in Local Public Organizations, which is probably the most important part of the D.C. meeting. This is accompanied by a decision on policy pursued in these organizations and by the allotment of specified work to members.

3. **The third function** of the N.C.R.M. District Committee is **gradually to formulate a total policy for the district**, a policy which covers diversification of farming, soil conservation projects, reafforestation schemes, establishment, expansion or restriction of industries, development of new forms of local government, development of educational and cultural facilities, and so on.

It is not the work of one meeting, or even of one year. It is a gradual process, which takes place over the years. It can be done properly only if the first work of social education is properly carried through. Social education gives to the individual D.C. member a pattern of development for his own district. From this follows the formulation of policies which are means to an end.

4. **The fourth function** of the N.C.R.M. District Committee is **to teach its members how to influence private individuals and public bodies.**

Speaking, writing, the running of press campaigns of public meetings, are only part of the job. Even more important is the method of "winning friends and influencing people", as the American, Dale Carnegie, puts it.

5. **The fifth function** of the N.C.R.M. District Committee is **to co-operate with other District Committees in the same region**, so that concerted plans of action will be followed whenever necessary.